



**Virginia Murray Sowell Center for
Research and Education in Sensory Disabilities
Texas Tech University**

**College of Education
3008 18th St.
Lubbock, TX 79409**

**Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments Application – Cohort II
(Project SASI)
2014-2016**

A limited number of scholarships are available to the Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments (SASI) program. **To apply for the second cohort of scholars, submit the following documents, postmarked by Monday, July 1, 2013, to Barb Balko-Rolf, SASI Collaborative Partner (CP) in Montana, via mail to the address at the end of this application.** Scholarship recipients are expected to begin the program in the Spring 2014 semester, starting in January 2014 and completing in December 2015 or May 2016, depending upon the program in which you participate.

To be eligible for this scholarship, you must be a general education teacher with current licensure/certification/endorsement in your state, or be a special education teacher who also has a general education licensure/certification/endorsement, and be a U.S. citizen. Upon completion of the program of studies, scholarship recipients will be eligible to be certified in their sensory impairment program area by their state educational agency. Completing scholarship recipients will also receive a Graduate Certificate in Sensory Impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorders from Texas Tech University.

Biographical Data

1. Full Legal Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)
2. Gender ___ Male ___ Female
3. Social Security Number _____

4. Present Mailing Address:

Address: _____

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Permanent Address (If different from above)

Address: _____

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Street Mailing Address [no Post Office Box (P.O.) numbers]:

Address: _____

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

5. Email address: _____

6. Phone numbers: Daytime _____ Evening _____ Cell _____

7. Are you a citizen or permanent resident of the United States of America or a U.S. Territory?

____ YES ____ NO

If yes, which state is your legal residence? _____

8. I am applying for:

- ____ Program of studies in Deafblindness (DB)
- ____ Program of studies in Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)
- ____ Program of studies in Visual Impairment (VI)
- ____ Program of studies in Orientation and Mobility (O&M)

9. Which of the following best describes your race?

- ____ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ____ Asian
- ____ Black or African American
- ____ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- ____ White
- ____ Other (please specify) _____

Are you Hispanic or Latino? Y N

10. Check the degrees or certificates you currently hold (check all that apply):

- ☐ Associate's Degree
- ☐ Bachelor's Degree
- ☐ Master's Degree
- ☐ Educational Specialist
- ☐ Doctoral Degree
- ☐ Post-doctoral degree
- ☐ State or professional credential(s)/certificate(s) in:

- ☐ State-issued endorsement(s) in:

- ☐ Grantee-issued endorsement
- ☐ High School diploma or equivalency
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

11. List the address and contact information for a relative or other person not living with you, through which you can be contacted:

Full Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Alt Phone: _____

Fax: _____ Email: _____

Academic Data

Please list below all undergraduate and graduate college/universities and/or professional schools you have attended, in chronological order. Attach an additional page if necessary.

SCHOOL	DATE		DEGREE/MAJOR
	FROM	TO	

Professional Data

Please list your teaching or other professional certifications, including where they were obtained and in which areas. Attach an additional page if necessary.

CERTIFICATION	OBTAINED FROM	AREA

Employment

Name of Current Employer: _____

Location: _____

Position title: _____

Additional Materials

1) Biographical essay and photo

Tell us about yourself, including your interests and work experience. Your essay should not exceed one page in length. Please double space and use 12-point font. Attach a recent photo of yourself.

2) Essay Question

Please respond to the questions below. Your response should not exceed three typed pages in length (12-point font, double spaced). Use standard, professional, high-quality writing style.

What are your interests within the field of deafblindness, deafness, visual impairments, or orientation and mobility? How do you envision using your education upon completion of your graduate program? How will your training help students or programs in your region? Do you have any additional skills that that will help you as a teacher in your region (languages spoken, community leadership experience, etc.)?

3) Letters of Reference

Please submit two letters of reference. These should attest to your professional abilities, leadership skills, and perseverance, and explain why you should be selected to receive the Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments scholarship.

4) Vita or Resume

Please include a current one- to two-page vita or resume showing educational and work experience.

5) Teaching Commitment Obligation

Please read and sign Teacher Commitment Obligation form. The electronic version of this document may include a typed signature, but the mailed copy must include an original hand-written signature.

Teaching Commitment Obligation and Scholarship Requirements

I understand that if I am selected to receive a Project SASI scholarship, I must:

- 1) teach on a fulltime basis in an approved special education program for a minimum of two consecutive years for each year of scholarship received (For information on federal service obligation, see <http://www.serviceobligations.ed.gov/1999%20faq.pdf>).
- 2) begin the first school year of eligible fulltime teaching service in a EC-12 school program within twelve months from the date I receive my certification, and
- 3) provide employment verification to Dr. Nora Griffin-Shirley at Texas Tech University until my obligation is fulfilled.

I understand that failure to comply with the above will result in a requirement to repay any scholarship funds received.

I understand that withdrawing from the program prior to completion will require me to refund all monies spent on tuition, travel, books, and other expenses.

I understand that not completing the program by the planned completion date may require me to pay for my own expenses beyond the planned completion date.

I understand that if money has been paid up front for travel that I do not complete, I will be required to refund the program for those expenses. Expenses for unused airline tickets may be reimbursed once they are used for program-required travel. Penalties for changing flights may not be reimbursed.

I understand that signing below does not guarantee selection as a Project SASI scholarship recipient.

Print full legal name

Signature

Date

Return completed application postmarked no later than July 1, 2013 to:

Barb Balko-Rolf
4825 Lower Miller Creek Rd.
Missoula, MT 59803

Project S.A.S.I.: Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments Addressing the Personnel Shortages of Rural, Remote, and High-Need Areas

Dr. Nora Griffin-Shirley, Dr. Rona Pogrund, and Dr. Roseanna Davidson



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
College of Education

Abstract

Through a \$1.25million competitive grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, Texas Tech University is embarking on a 5-year effort to combat the critical shortage of qualified special education teachers professionally trained in the areas of visual impairment (VI), deafness and hard of hearing (D/HH), deafblindness (DB), and orientation and mobility (O&M), across the United States in rural and remote areas. This project employs a unique focus on training scholars in the characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and appropriate intervention for children with ASD who also have sensory impairments. Texas Tech University is playing a vital role in the success of students with ASD and sensory impairments across the nation.

Program Objectives:

- Identify, recruit, and train professionals in remote, and high-need locations to increase the capacity to serve students with sensory impairments from birth through secondary transition.
- Provide specialized training in effective strategies for working with students with sensory impairments and autism spectrum disorder. Scholars will receive a graduate certificate in sensory impairment and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- Provide a high quality personnel preparation program to scholars via a hybrid program that utilizes distance education, face-to-face instruction, and local support with outcomes that scholars will become trained professionals with expertise in one area of sensory impairment.
- By the end of the project, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Texas Tech University and the State Departments of Education for each of the six collaborating states will be established to maintain this collaborative partnership beyond the grant period.

Introduction

Project SASI, Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments, proposes to alleviate the need for professionals trained in the areas of visual impairment (VI), deafness and hard of hearing (D/HH), deafblindness (DB), and orientation and mobility (O&M), as well as professionals with expertise in the dual diagnosis of Autism and sensory impairments in rural, remote, and high-need areas in the states of Arkansas, Idaho, Mississippi, Montana, Texas and Wyoming. This project includes a unique focus on students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) who also have sensory impairments because the prevalence of students with ASD is on the rise. With proper training in the characteristics of an appropriate intervention for children with ASD, as well as children with sensory impairments, professionals will be skilled to meet the unique needs of these learners.

Project S.A.S.I.



Students with Autism and Sensory Impairments:
Addressing the Personnel Shortages of Rural, Remote, and High-Need Areas



Method

- Via State collaborative partners, recruit 40 scholars for two cohorts.
- Books and materials are paid for by Project SASI
- Courses are offered via web-based course instruction via Blackboard including a variety of distance education technology such as audio and video podcasts, chat rooms, threaded discussions, email, YouTube clips, etc.
- Establish a dedicated SASI scholar online support group to support one another because of the long distances between them.
- Face-to-Face component connects the scholars who may feel disconnected through a distance education-only model and enriches the scholars' learning experience.
- Cycle of Reflective Analysis of Student Work through development of a training video via collaboration with Granite State College in New Hampshire will be employed during the internship phase as a model to assess scholar effectiveness based on student outcomes in special education.
- Establish collaborative partners (CP) and develop a mentor program where the CP's and local mentors will receive training from an established Mentor Program at The Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to provide mentorship in order to insure that local children with ASD and sensory impairments are served.

Conclusion:

- Project SASI, in its first six months, has successfully moved forward in meeting its objectives.
- First cohort of 20 scholars began classes in January, 2012.
- There are scholars from each of the six targeted states and students in all four of the target programs: VI, D/HH, DB, and O&M.